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under Eugene IV and Nicholas V in the middle of the fifteenth century, until it lies prostrate in moral and spiritual ruin in the debauchery of Innocent VIII and Alexander VI; we view it staggering through the unchristian lives of Julius II, the war leader, and Leo X, the magnificent pagan. At last, the outraged majesty of the Christian faith and conscience, symbolized in the Ninety-five Theses posted on the chapel door in Wittenberg by Martin Luther in 1517, proclaims its utter collapse, so that it ceases to be the head and centre of the united Christianity of the West. Henceforth, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Papal Church is disowned by England, Scotland, Germany, Scandinavia, and later by France and America. In the new Papacy of Sixtus V of the sixteenth century and of Benedict XIV of the eighteenth century, aided by the Inquisition, the Council of Trent, and the Jesuit Society, it made vain efforts to preserve the ruins of its former greatness and power. In the life of to-day the Papal Church takes its place among the other Christian churches of the dismembered Christendom of the West.

Such a hasty outline gives but an imperfect conception of the scope and content of this important and valuable book. It is written in a style so graceful, so simple, so clear, and so scholarly, that the book is at once a model of historical writing, and is at the same time as interesting as a novel. His full and accurate use of the sources, especially those in the Vatican so recently made accessible to scholars, his references to, and in many cases his judicious comments on, the recent writers on the principal topics in the whole field of this history, his keen analysis of character, his able mastery of details, and his intelligent judgment of policies and methods,—all this serves to illumine every one of the twenty chapters of his book. CHARLES L. WELLS.

PLANTATION SONGS. By Ruth McEnery Stuart. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

There are qualities about Ruth McEnery Stuart's *Plantation Songs* that are keenly pleasing to anyone conversant with the real negro songs—and there are other qualities that tend to arouse the carping critic within him.

Let us first, however, clear away a few minor points. Somewhat over a third of the volume is taken up with poems unrelated to the negro dialect pieces. Of these the "Songs of Life and Love" are simply conventional poems, rather below the average of magazine verse to-day. Most of them are quiet and unimpressive; a few, "The Cycle of Years," for instance, have a rather vague coherence; and all are entirely undistinguished by any unusual quality. Although the poems under the general heading, "Just For Fun," show several pleasing touches of fantastic humor, as in "Ye Merry Peacemakers," the book could hardly be thought of as being different from the many volumes of colorless poems now appearing, were it not for the dialect poems which give it its title.

A glance at reviews that have already appeared in the *Boston Herald* and the *New York Sunday Times* reveals the fact that Mrs. Stuart's dialect poems take. And, since the best proof of the pudding is still in the eating, perhaps there should be an end on't, so far as this criticism is concerned. One shouldn't "multiply distinctions." Certainly these verses, with their lilt, their humor, and their genre pictures, are well qualified to please any reader, whether his knowledge of negro songs be based on minstrel shows, dialect writers, or an acquaintance with the negro songs as actually sung. There are dialect touches good enough to delight the soul of Joel Chandler Harris. "When I *balamces* my bundle on my head," "sa'nters" for saunters, "safe-t" for safe, "tranch" for trance, "tromped" for tramped, "promus" for promise—all these make Southerners chuckle with delight at encountering in print such perfectly genuine negro expressions. No one who has heard the talk of uneducated negroes can deny that Mrs. Stuart imitates that talk convincingly.

Why say imitate rather than reproduce? Because, while the language of these poems is in most cases genuinely negro, the psychology and form are not. They are genuinely Caucasian. The poems in most cases simply express Caucasian sentiments in negro language. The *New York Sunday Times* critic to the contrary, much of the humor of these poems is not negro humor at all. Some of it is Caucasian word-play, as, for example, the passage quoted by the *Times* wherein it is said that "Silvy's

clocks is on her stockin's." Those who have been brought up among the negroes, those who have heard and collected negro songs, even those who have read their *Uncle Remus* discriminatingly, all realize that negro humor is mostly of the broad variety, depending upon ridiculous and exaggerated situations, not phraseology. Caucasian wit and negro humor are too often confounded in these poems of Mrs. Stuart's.

Before leaving the matter of psychology one or two other points might be noticed. The real negro songs contain much fewer and poorer figures of speech than do these songs of Mrs. Stuart's. Only a very small proportion of the genuinely negro songs are feminine in their point of view. Like most folk-songs, their psychology is predominantly masculine. These *Plantation Songs* are, on the contrary, predominantly feminine in their point of view. There is a great deal more sentimentality in these songs than in the songs sung by the negroes of to-day. It appears that the songs of Stephen Foster and others of his kind have caused us to look for more sentiment in negro songs than actually exist there. The result has been a false conventionalized idea of the negro song to which many who know better, like Mrs. Stuart, have unconsciously deferred too much. One of the widest divagations from the real negro is in the love songs. In the songs of the negro himself love is not so important as many suppose, and as these poems of Mr. Stuart's imply. Where it does play a part it is generally crude, frequently coarse, and almost always actual and concrete rather than abstract, as in Mrs. Stuart's "O Love's My Meat." Your negro is not of the *amans amare* school; his type is *amans* Amanda or Mary Jane. Mrs. Stuart's negroes sing of love like educated negroes or slightly sentimental Caucasians. Perhaps the most realistic songs in the volume are the hymns, which come very near the spirit and expression of the old negro spirituals.

In the matter of form these poems also depart from the beaten tracks of genuine negro songs. Most negro songs are composed of rhymed couplets. They are metrically loose and contain plenty of repetition, especially the hymns. In some songs only the second and fourth lines rhyme. Mrs. Stuart's songs have an exactness of metre, a facility of diction, and a variety of stanza

forms unknown to the negroes themselves. One poem—"Lord 'a Mercy On Us!"—flaunts an envoy.

Yet these songs are attractive. Once establish the point that they are not real negro songs and nothing more can be said against them. A contrast with the cruder songs actually sung by the negroes serves to emphasize the gracefulness of phrase, the rhythmical facility, and the readiness of dialect commanded by Mrs. Stuart. She has elevated the tone of the negro songs and altered their psychology and form; but in so doing she has made them more entertaining and enjoyable, and has suited conventional expectations. Everyone is pleased and entertained, except the technical student of negro songs. Once let him make his academic distinction between these songs and the songs composed and sung by the negroes themselves, and he too should be content.

N. I. WHITE.

FROM THE HIDDEN WAY. Being seventy-five adaptations in verse. By James Branch Cabell. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. \$1.35.

Mr. Cabell's little offering of verse adaptations, whose title, *From the Hidden Way*, is itself an adaptation from that haunting, yearning *Ballade des belles dames du temps jadis*, is indeed a revelation of verse technique of no mean order. Though one may dislike the note of "preciosity" that sounds once and again in his prose as well as in his verse, Mr. Cabell does charm us with his echoes of frankly epicurean relish for love and life and the good things of the earth. The hidden ways he explores are faintly traceable in half a dozen minor poets, ranging in date from the days of the troubadours through the Renaissance to our own more recent imitators of Baudelaire and Verlaine. I say faintly traceable, for indeed Mr. Cabell has hardly anywhere approached the exactness of translation.

The volume constitutes one of the many protests, more or less sincere, against the sordidness, the abject materialism, the puritanism of our age. Such a protest against the rampant conventionalities of life is by no means new, and will generally find those who condemn it and those who approve it. Mr. Cabell's protest, let me hasten to assure you, is generally quite decorous.